ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A high availability communication system is disclosed having multiple layers of redundancy, including network interface redundancy, network switching mechanism redundancy, and functional redundancy. To minimize the effect of the redundancy on other parts of an overall system, virtual addresses are implemented. These virtual addresses enable other parts of the overall system to interact with the communication system without knowing the details of the redundancy. By implementing multiple layers of redundancy with virtual addresses in this manner, high availability is achieved without causing inefficiencies to be suffered by other parts of the overall system.

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